



E-Filing Fact Sheet

E-filing is the ability of parties to exchange data from one computer system to another. Data elements that are contained in a partner's computer system are packaged in XML format and sent electronically to create data in MNCIS Odyssey. The State Court Integration Broker (IB) is the intermediary in the process of e-filing. Successful e-filing is a collaborative effort between local court administration, court business partners, and state court technology resources.

HOW DOES E-FILING WORK?

E-filing works through the use of Extensible Markup Language (XML). The primary purpose of XML is to facilitate the sharing of data across different information systems. Agencies who choose to submit e-files are actually submitting XML packets of data, which are then sent to a receiving computer program such as MNCIS Odyssey. This is referred to as e-filing.

The Integration Broker (IB) at the state court sits between the submitting system and MNCIS Odyssey, and does the work of transforming the submitted XML into the type of XML that Odyssey can consume. The standard for sending XML to the courts is referred to as Minnesota Court XML (CourtXML). The CourtXML e-filing schemas provide the standards for submitting agencies as to how they need to format their XML in order to communicate with the State Courts and Odyssey.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF E-FILING?

E-Complaints:

The electronic submission of a criminal complaint to the courts is an example of e-filing. The e-filing process for an E-Complaint begins with a prosecutor's system providing criminal complaint information in CourtXML format in an electronic file. The file is then submitted through the courts' IB where the completeness of the electronic file is evaluated. If any of the required data elements are missing, the IB returns a "system rejected" message to the originating prosecutor's system.

The prosecutor also prints out the complaint that goes to the court for signing by the judge for probable cause. (In some prosecutor systems, a paper complaint can be printed directly from the case management system.) When all signatures are obtained, the complaint is submitted to the court and is used to facilitate processing of the electronic file.

UCP #171 identifies data elements that prosecutors are requested to provide to courts as part of the Criminal Complaint, as well as data elements that are part of the Defendant Fact Sheet (data important to courts and state agencies). Information on UCP #171 can be located as follows: <http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=1683>.

Other e-filings that are handled in a similar manner to e-filing of complaints are e-filing of tab charges and individual citations.

Batch Citations:

The electronic submission of batch citations to the courts is another example of e-filing. Batch citation filing is the ability of law enforcement agencies to file citations with the court in an electronic batch format. Successful batch citation filing is a collaborative effort that involves the participation of court administration, one or more law enforcement agencies, and a vendor with a product that can convert data into the CourtXML Citation schema format. For batch citations, there is the opportunity to eliminate the paper citation because the e-filing of batch citations includes the creation of an e-file facsimile of the citation in Odyssey.

A batch of citations is uploaded overnight to Odyssey. Court administrators can decide whether citations that arrive in a batch need to be handled by the court staff or whether they can just create MNCIS Odyssey cases without intervention. Unless there is a problem with one or some of the individual citations in the batch (e.g., a citation may be missing the "appear by date" or it may result in multiple possible party matches, etc.), court staff intervention is not required.

Other E-Filing Types:

Besides e-filings that initiate a case, other e-filing types are available for partner agencies to update a case in MNCIS Odyssey (see next page). The available e-filing types will vary according to the needs of a specific county. Court administrators can select which e-filing types they want to allow from business partners.

Initiate a Case	Description
Citations: Batch Citations	See the Batch Citations explanation on Page 1.
Citations: Single Citations	Used when a system needs to submit a single citation. A single citation may be sent (versus a batch of citations) from a violations bureau computer system, such as VIBES, because the individual citation requires a court hearing.
Complaints	See the E-Complaints explanation on Page 1.
Tab Charges	Used when an agency, such as a law enforcement agency, initiates a case with gross misdemeanor charges by tab charge. This is a case initiation type used by the Hennepin County Jail.
Update a Case	Description
Add Case Cross Reference Number to a MNCIS case	Used when a non court agency submits a case identifier from their system. For example, a prosecutors' internal case file number may be submitted to add to the MNCIS case.
Add Warrant (available soon)	Used to add a warrant on a case when the e-filed complaint is also requesting a warrant.
Agency Note To File	Adds an informational case event reflecting non-court case activity to a MNCIS case.
Attorney Assignment	Used when an attorney system is allowed to submit an attorney to a case. For example, an attorney representing the plaintiff or defendant on a case.
Biometric Collection Status	Allows external agencies to update the biometric collection status for fingerprints and DNA on criminal case defendants. This service will add, update, or remove the Fingerprints Needed, Fingerprints Taken, and DNA Taken case flags on a specific court case.
Case Detention Status	Allows agencies to electronically submit the detention status to the court for a defendant on a specific court case.
Hearing E-File	Used when a non court agency is allowed to schedule hearings on agreed upon calendars for an existing or new case.
Initial Release Conditions	Specifies initial release conditions for a defendant on a criminal case.
Interpreter Status	Allows external agencies to update the interpreter status of a criminal case defendant. This service will add, update, or remove the Interpreter Required case flag on a specific court case.
Professional Party Assignment	Used when a non court agency is allowed to submit a professional participant to a case. For example, a probation agency may submit the assignment of Jane Smith as a probation officer for a defendant.
Warrant Status	Submits a warrant status to the Court indicating that a warrant has been cleared by arrest.
Update a Party	Description
Add Other Agency ID to a MNCIS party	Used when a non court agency assigns an ID to an individual.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF E-FILING FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION?

- Eliminates the tedious data entry tasks associated with filing. Saves on human resources because data is entered only once.
- Improves consistency and accuracy by reducing human error because data is entered directly into the case management system.
- Eliminates cost, storage, and handling of paper.
- Speeds the exchange of data between organizations.
- Allows for better service to the public and effective use of taxpayer funds.

WHAT DOES E-FILING NOT OFFER?

- It is not entirely paperless. Although the paper flow is diminished greatly, there is still some paper flow.
- It does not yet allow for an electronic exchange of forms and documents.

WHAT DOES COURT ADMINISTRATION NEED TO DO?

Court administrators have the choice to participate in e-filing. If your court wants to begin e-filing now, see below.

The First Step

The first step for any e-filing project is to contact your county attorney, law enforcement agency/s, or other court business partners to assess interest and ability of their systems to e-file to the court. Direct your partners, and their vendors, to the Courts Integration Services website for technical information on how to work with the courts on e-filing projects. Contact the Courts Integration Team in the Information Technology Divisions at SCAO for assistance with your e-filing project.

Information on E-Filing

For more information on E-Filing see: <http://www.mncourts.gov/is>.